

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

A GUIDE FOR CIRCUIT QUARTERLY MEETINGS: ASSESSING PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY

Due to the vital nature of this aspect in the life and well-being of the church, the task of discerning whether a prospective candidate for the ordained ministry is truly called by God is surely one of the most important duties of the CQM. Therefore it should never be undertaken in a sentimentalized or casual manner. The process of candidature is predicated on the faithfulness and integrity of the CQM. As the community who best knows the qualities of its prospective candidates, the CQM plays a vitally determinative role in assisting the entire church to discern whether or not a prospective candidate has the personal, spiritual, moral, vocational and other qualities which are essential for ensuring the integrity and high standards required for the ordained ministry.

Accordingly, the CQM must fulfil its responsibility in this regard with utmost honesty and diligence. The following questionnaire serves as a guide to assist the CQM when assessing prospective candidates.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Spiritual Character:

- a. Does the person manifest the love of God?
- b. Does the person demonstrate an understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in his/her daily living?
- c. Does the person clearly communicate personal faith in Christ?
- d. Does the person communicate a convincing sense of being called by God into the ordained ministry?
- e. Does the person participate in the life of the church?
- f. Does the person regularly worship, especially when not preaching?
- g. Does the person faithfully attend a Class Meeting, Bible Study, or other discipleship group?
- h. Does the person exhibit "fruits of the Spirit", e.g. compassion, integrity, sense of justice, love for all, patience, joy, hope, et cetera

2. Vocational Readiness

- a. Does the person show an understanding of the Wesleyan ethos?
- b. Does the person adequately explain why he / she believes he / she has the basic qualities to become an ordained minister?
- c. Does the person have above average communication skills? Do the members of the CQM regard the person as someone who will adequately do the primary preaching and teaching within a congregation?
- d. Does the person have leadership qualities?
- e. Does the person have basic management skills?
- f. Is the person well organised? Will he / she be able to organise a congregation in terms of its administration?

3. Academic Potential

- a. Does the person have the capability to do intensive theological studies?
- b. Does the person's matriculation record inspire confidence in the members of the CQM?
- c. Does the person have the diligence, discipline and dedication to be a hard-working student?

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- d. Are the members of the CQM confident that the person possesses the intellectual capability to provide leadership to a congregation?

4. Overall Maturity and Attitude

- a. Is the person self-motivated and self-disciplined?
- b. Does the person have a positive self-esteem?
- c. Is the person emotionally stable, i.e. does he / she have negative mood swings or emotional outbursts?
- d. Does the person respond positively to failure, disappointment or when he / she does not get things their way?
- e. Does the person have a positive family life?
- f. Does the person genuinely care for others?
- g. Does the person understand ministry in terms of sacrificial service to others? In other words, does the person possess the quality of servanthood?

5. Interpersonal / Social Skills

- a. Is the person caring and compassionate?
- b. Does the person relate well to other people?
- c. Does the person have positive regard for people of diverse backgrounds, e.g. age, race, gender, social class, et cetera?
- d. Is the person tolerant with people with whom he / she differs?
- e. Is the person able to inspire others to work together as a team?
- f. Is the person respectful of authority?
- g. Does the person listen to others, especially those with points of view different from him / her?
- h. Does the person have a healthy modern sense of the ethos, values, ways, and diversity of Africa?

6. Discipline & Responsibility

- a. Does the person present himself / herself well in public?
- b. Does the person respect public property?
- c. Does the person have good decision-making skills?
- d. Does the person have the quality to respond well to critique, criticism or feedback?
- e. Has the person managed his / her personal finances? Is the person in debt?
- f. Is the person punctual? Does he/she have good time management?
- g. Does the person complete tasks undertaken by him / her

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7. Personal Bearing & Conduct

- a. Is the person honest? Will he/she be able to resist corruption, especially the temptations of money?
- b. Is the person trust-worthy?
- c. Is the person reliable?
- d. Is the person able to manage stressful situations?
- e. Does the person manage his / her anger?
- f. Does the person have the ability to manage conflict?
- g. Does the person exhibit a sense of sexual morality?
- h. Does the person exercise proper self-care?
- i. Does the person have any unhealthy habits?

8. **THE BIG QUESTION:** WOULD THE MEMBERS OF THE CQM BE GLAD TO RECEIVE THE PERSON AS THE MINISTER OF THEIR CONGREGATION? BE FULLY HONEST WITH YOUR RESPONSES TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS.

THANK YOU FOR FAITHFULLY ASSESSING AND DISCERNING THE PERSON(S) WHO HAVE PRESENTED THEMSELVES TO THE CQM. THE PROCESS OF DISCERNMENT IS COMMUNAL. THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE ABLE, AT THE END OF THE PROCESS, TO DECLARE: "IT SEEMED RIGHT TO US AND THE HOLY SPIRIT!"

REMEMBER: NOT EVERYONE WHO THINKS THEY ARE CALLED IS INDEED CALLED. IT IS OUR SOLEMN TASK AND RESPONSIBILITY TO DISCERN TOGETHER WHETHER OR NOT THOSE WHO PRESENT THEMSELVES TO US HAVE THE ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL INGREDIENTS TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF GOD AS AN ORDAINED MINISTER IN THE SERVICE OF JESUS CHRIST.